

50X1-HUM

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Page 4 of 23 Pages

50X1-HUM

Methodology of Preparing and Conducting Operational  
Command-Staff Exercises and War Games

by

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(Based on the experience of operational training of the  
Transcaucasus and Carpathian military districts and the staff  
of the airborne troops)

Operational command-staff exercises and games provide our  
generals, officers, and staffs with extensive opportunities to  
acquire and improve their practical skills in troop control.

We know that the preparation for an exercise (war game)  
begins by specifying the theme and training goals. A broad  
operational content is characteristic of the thematics of  
command-staff exercises, and this requires the integrated working  
out of the most important problems of organizing and conducting  
present-day operations. In our opinion, it is inadvisable to  
conduct command-staff exercises on themes with a narrow  
orientation where only individual problems are worked out, even  
if these are important. The great effort invested in organizing  
an exercise and the material costs must be compensated for by  
carefully working out the maximum possible number of problems.  
As is shown by practice, no fewer than six to seven days should  
be devoted to army and front command-staff exercises. As for war  
games, particularly command games, individual tasks can be worked  
out in them, therefore, the time required to conduct them can be  
limited to two to three days.

To correctly formulate the training goals means to answer  
the question of what result the director expects from the  
exercise (game). If it is conducted on a new theme, then  
obviously it will be advisable to pursue the goal and study it,  
but if the basic content of the theme is already well known to  
the trainees, then we will strive to improve our practical skills  
or obtain necessary experience, while in a number of cases we  
will strive simply to check the level of training of one or  
another control organ. Since the themes of operational exercises



Page 5 of 23 Pages

and games, as a rule, should be combined themes, the goals may be consolidated or differentiated.

The correct choice of the exercise area is very important. It should permit all the central questions of the theme to be worked out in a specified sequence and should enable control posts to be positioned and relocated "under combat conditions". It is also necessary to examine the possibility of having the directing body visit them with the least expenditure of time; i.e., it is necessary to take into consideration the availability of airfields, landing sites, motor roads, etc. Leasing lines from the Ministry of Communications to provide control is a frequent occurrence, therefore, when selecting an exercise area we must not fail to take into account the links that these lines pass through and how to utilize them with the least expenditure of funds in lease payments.

We believe that the aforementioned initial data are fundamental when developing the concept, plan of execution, and other basic documents of the exercise (game).

As we know, the main method of training in a command-staff exercise and war game is to have generals and staff officers fulfil in actual practice their functional duties in troop control with the complement of their table of organization organs or only their operations groups, set against a background of a specific and continuously developing operational situation which must be established and built up avoiding oversimplification. Let us take as an example the situation which might develop in the zone of a front or army as a result of massed enemy nuclear strikes. It is regrettable that often in exercises the situation is presented in an oversimplified manner; staffs are able to "quickly collect" precise data on the location and yield of nuclear bursts and on the position and status of their own troops. In this case, they do not take sufficiently into account that as a result of nuclear strikes, individual levels of control may be put out of action for a considerable time, communications will be disrupted, extensive zones of destruction and radioactive contamination will occur, and the trainees will have to exert considerable efforts to refine the situation in the front and rear areas and restore the combat effectiveness of the troops in order to fulfil the tasks.

50X1-HUM



Page 6 of 23 Pages  
50X1-HUM

We feel that it is necessary to employ training films and simulation extensively during a command-staff exercise. It is difficult, of course, to simulate a large number of nuclear strikes and even more so their aftereffects and results with the simulation means employed in tactical exercises. But there is no need for this. In our opinion, training films could provide a visual and audible perception of the situation which develops as a result of nuclear strikes. It would be advisable to produce films from sequences showing the aftereffects of nuclear strikes delivered against model targets. For example, the aftereffects of grouped strikes against a motorized rifle division, a missile brigade or a regiment; of single strikes against command posts, airfields, towns, railroad junctions, and other installations. A viewing of the appropriate material, together with the receipt of data on the situation throughout the exercise, will allow trainees to "sense" the picture of present-day combat operations.

We all know the attention the enemy devotes to the disruption of troop control. Control posts are the primary installations which he will strive to destroy and neutralize by various means. Therefore, it is advisable to practice the following measures on a wide scale in all command-staff exercises in order to force staffs to work under conditions which maximally approximate a combat situation: air attacks employing conventional and chemical bombs; attacks by sabotage groups; putting individual elements of command posts out of action, particularly communications centers; and jamming the operation of radio means.

The experience of the last war shows that staffs endeavored to collect data about all aspects of the situation. Various elements of the battle formation and operational disposition of the troops were carefully plotted on maps, analyzed, and assessed in order to make a decision. However, even then, particularly during the course of operations, this was not always possible, despite the persistence of the staffs. The speed with which present-day operations develop is several times greater. Therefore, to demand from staffs that they engage in collecting data on the situation in as much detail as was done in the last war, is, in our opinion, inadvisable. What is important is to obtain the most necessary, most essential information, but to do this in a timely manner, so that the commander may react quickly to the development of events.

Page 7 of 23 Pages  
50X1-HUM

It seems to us that hypothetical situations employing data generalized for a specific time period should be eliminated from the practice of command-staff exercises as being contrary to the principle "teach what is needed in a war and teach just how it is done in a war". Only in individual cases, when the complement of participants is limited, can we forgo this principle and furnish data on the situation in a somewhat generalized and summarized manner.

How do we give out data on the situation to the trainees? It is difficult to give a simple answer to this question, since the sequence of changes in a situation is determined primarily by the content of the situation. For example, it is advisable to pass on information about nuclear strikes immediately after they are delivered, but the results or aftereffects of these strikes should be passed on as the staff takes measures to ascertain them. Data on the status of our own troops, as well as on the large units of the enemy conducting combat actions, may be received in the front (army) staff every two to three hours when the operation is developing according to plan, and immediately when the nature of combat actions changes drastically. Information on enemy reserves in the depth should be sent depending on how the staff was able to organize reconnaissance. The recommended frequency for receiving data on the situation is disrupted during so-called operational transitions. But in this case too it is inadvisable to give the situation in summary form to the trainees. The situation must be built up using fragmentary data as events develop, gradually bringing the trainees up to that moment when new decisions must be made or previously made decisions must be refined considerably. This methodology induces trainees to show purposefulness and persistence in obtaining the information they need. The need for this is dictated by the complexity of troop control in present-day operations.

In our opinion, one of the important methods of training in operational exercises and games is for the director to be briefed from reports of formation commanders (commanders) and staff officers on the developing situation. This is particularly applicable to war games and also to exercises which are of a test nature. Experience shows that this method of training is used by the director of the command-staff exercise in first-level staffs from two to four times and in second-level staffs -- once or

Page 8 of 23 Pages

twice. However, we have recently observed the tendency, and a natural one, besides, of reducing not only the number of briefings, but especially the duration of each of them. For example, in operational exercises and games in the Transcaucasus Military District in 1965-1966, the duration of briefings on the average was one to two hours for a front (army) headquarters and one to 1.5 hours for a division headquarters. This was enough time for the director to be briefed by the formation commander (commander), the chief of staff, chief of the operations directorate (department), chief of intelligence, and also the chiefs of the branch arms, services, and the rear. Also worthy of attention is the practice whereby during the exercise the chiefs of the branch arms, special troops, and rear of the second-level staffs briefed, not the director, but his assistants in the appropriate branch arms and services. This enables us to evaluate more thoroughly the level of training of the trainees and provide them with timely and skilled assistance.

The efficiency of the training depends greatly on the personal qualities of the director, his training on the given theme, and character. Therefore, it would be desirable if each briefing had a planned basis and were prepared with the participation of the staff of the directing body, which should prepare for the director a map with the front (army) commander's decision and a brief plan specifying the briefing schedule and the main problems stemming from the theme of the exercise and the specific situation.

As we know, the trainees prepare themselves thoroughly for a briefing. This finds expression primarily in the preparation of reports and illustrations in the form of maps, charts, tables, etc. This is both proper and necessary. However, in practice we observe instances when colorfully drawn up maps exert decisive influence on the rating of the trainees; although they evidently spent considerable effort and time on this work, it was to the detriment of the quality of the decisions, plans, calculations, and their very foundations. Overemphasizing the showy side of a subject to the detriment of its basic content cannot be justified. Of course, we do not wish to belittle the role of the pictorial and precise drawing up of graphic documents for a report, but this must be done within reasonable limits. And <sup>50X1-HUM</sup> <sub>11</sub> in general, it is better in practice for trainees to brief from working maps and documents since under actual combat conditions

Page 9 of 250X1-HUM

there will be neither the time nor the opportunity to prepare labor-consuming poster diagrams, charts, etc.

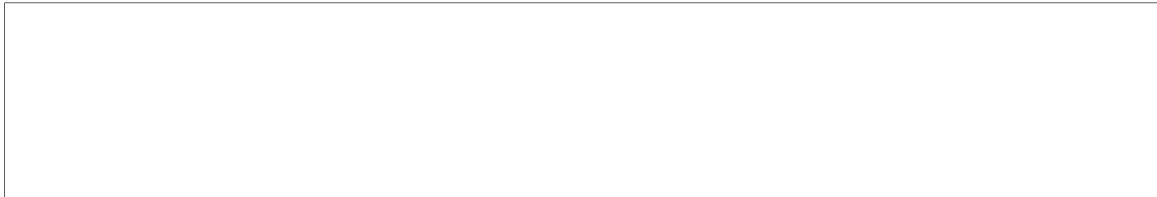
During a briefing there is no justification for "chewing out" trainees for their mistakes and deficiencies and it is gratifying to observe that this occurrence is more and more decidedly becoming outdated. A businesslike atmosphere and the ability to patiently hear out a trainee without interrupting him with numerous questions will, in our opinion, be conducive to a favorable solution to the problems being studied.

Employing the training method of having trainees present briefings on the decisions in two-sided command-staff exercises involves certain difficulties. Thus, working with only two army headquarters, together with flights to their command posts, may take up to five or six hours, and if it is necessary to also visit the headquarters of divisions, then the time expended is almost doubled. As a result, great difficulties arise in playing out the combat actions of both sides in accordance with the decisions made, and forced and extended pauses occur during the exercise. To avoid this, it is advisable to combine the method of having trainees brief the director personally in their command posts with the method of briefing over communications means and of studying the combat documents submitted to the directing body of the exercise.

The concluding and very important part of an exercise (game) is the critique. As we know, its preparation is begun early and continues during the course of the exercise (game). It is most often prepared in the form of two reports -- by the chief of the staff of the directing body and by the director.

The chief of the staff of the directing body usually presents the themes, the main goals and initial situation, and the composition, tasks and plans of both sides according to the concept of the directing body; he presents the content of the decisions of the formation commanders (commanders) based on the initial situation, and gives a brief outline of the specific features of the situation, and their decisions for the subsequent stages of the exercise (game). The principal problems, which arise during the course of a long exercise, concerning the work of staffs in supporting combat actions and providing troop control are analyzed in the concluding portion of the report.

50X1-HUM



Page 10 of 23 Pages

The report or critique proper of the exercise (game) directing body can be presented in five sections.

As a rule, the introduction presents the specific characteristics of the given exercise (game), a brief account of the nature of the military-political situation in the theater of military operations, certain requirements of the directive from the Ministry of Defense on operational training, and theoretical propositions pertaining to the theme and problems being studied.

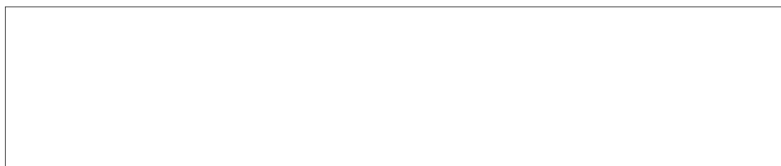
The second part of the critique is the main part. In it, the decisions of the formation commanders (commanders) are analyzed by stages for their positive and negative aspects. The assessment of the decisions should be objective, persuasive, and supported by the appropriate provisions from manuals and regulations, and by examples from combat practice.

In the third part, the most significant problems of employing the branch arms and special troops and of supporting combat actions may be discussed. Allocating this group of problems to a separate section permits the critique to be prepared more quickly.

The content of the fourth part is an assessment of the work of the exercise (game) participants and of the staffs as a whole. It is generally known that this part of the critique customarily arouses lively interest among the trainees and therefore the director, the staff of the directing body, and the umpires must take an especially careful approach to the assessment of the work of the trainees. It is advisable to supplement assessments, and particularly unfavorable ones, with a brief description of the activity of the trainee and recommendations.

In the conclusion, overall conclusions are customarily made about the degree to which the training goals were achieved and specific measures to eliminate the shortcomings uncovered are defined.

Some comments about the strength of the staff of the directing body and the umpire complement. In recent years we<sup>50X1-HUM</sup> have observed a steady tendency to reduce them. And this is completely natural. However, it seems to us that the strength of the directing body and the umpire complement can only be reduced





Page 11 of 23 Pages  
50X1-HUM

within reasonable limits, i.e., taking into account the tasks assigned to these organs in preparing, and particularly in conducting, the exercises and games. The organization of the staff of the directing body, its strength, and the umpire complement will depend largely on the scale of the exercise (war game) being conducted.

The primary organ of a staff, as we know, is the operations department. Its minimum complement can be five to six, but when two-sided exercises are being conducted -- eight to ten fully trained operations officers, whose work, as a rule, is organized with a precise allocation of functional duties. Some of the officers of the staff of the directing body are organizationally combined into groups: assistant directors of the exercise for the rocket troops and artillery (four to five officers); for the rear services (three to four); for air defense, engineer and chemical troops (three to four); for aviation (one or two); and deputy chiefs of staff of the directing body for intelligence (two to three) and for communications (three to four officers). In addition, it is advisable to have groups in the complement of the staff of the directing body for preparing materials for the critique (two to three men), for controlling radio deception, radio jamming, and radio monitoring (three to four men), and also a support group. When conducting one-sided exercises and war games a group of five to six men acting as the enemy should be set up, and in two-sided exercises and games -- a group playing out combat actions. Thus, there can be from 45 to 50 generals and officers in the directing body of an operational command-staff exercise or command-staff war game.

The umpire complement is also determined on the basis of the tasks assigned to them. There is the opinion that the main task of umpires is to train senior personnel and staffs allocated for the exercise or game. We cannot fully share this point of view. Generals and officers in exercises and games learn under the supervision of their own direct superiors. In our opinion, the main task of the umpires, particularly when attached to the second-level senior personnel and staffs, consists of building up the situation in an instructive manner and watching over <sup>the work</sup> of the trainees. 50X1-HUM

If we adhere to these views, then reducing the number of umpires is fully justified. This has been done repeatedly in

Page 12 of 23 Pages  
50X1-HUM

practice. Thus, in the last front command-staff exercise and game conducted under the direction of the military district commander, practically no umpires were designated to be attached to the front headquarters, and their tasks were fulfilled by assistant directors and officers of the staff of the directing body. In armies the number of umpires was limited to 10 or 12 and in division headquarters -- four or five generals and officers. Three to four officers were allocated to the senior umpire attached to the second-level commander and staff in order to build up the situation in a timely manner and to maintain continuous contact with the director and the staff. We are not inclined to call them the final umpires since their main task was to provide technical assistance to the senior umpire in playing out the combat actions.

These, in our opinion, are some of the problems in the methodology of preparing and conducting operational exercises and games whose positive solution will help improve the operational training of operational staffs.

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In our Carpathian Military District, as in other military districts, command-staff exercises and war games are the principal undertakings for operational training of the command and staffs. The military district commander customarily directs a front command-staff exercise and simultaneously assumes the role of front commander. The deputy chiefs of the branch arms and services are designated as his assistants and the deputy commanders act as umpires attached to the headquarters of the armies with operations groups of from five to six officers of various specialties allocated to assist them. The staff of the directing body, as a rule, is headed by the first deputy chief of staff of the military district. This staff is made up of groups to plan and conduct the exercise, axis officers to put together the situation, for critique, radio deception and the production of jamming, and the organization of communications and materiel-technical support. In all, 25 to 30 generals and officers are allocated to work in the staff. 50X1-HUM

The main content of the theme of the exercises and games conducted recently was to organize the movement of troops forward over long distances under conditions of the active exchange of

Page 13 of 23 Pages

nuclear strikes by belligerents, to prepare and conduct an offensive operation and a meeting engagement, to commit the front's second echelon to action, etc. In this manner, we worked out in the exercises and games the main problems of preparing and conducting front and army offensive operations carried out by employing weapons of mass destruction. No more than three or four training problems were posed, and those which actually would have to be solved with the initiation of military operations were worked out first.

Certain problems were worked out in the form of research. These were, for example, determining the effectiveness of employing a computer post to solve operational problems at the army level, the procedure for the transfer and technical servicing of tanks when a rail movement already initiated is disrupted or stopped, seeking methods of raising the combat readiness of the troops, rear services support when troops are advancing over long distances, etc.

Research on these problems allowed us to draw a number of practical conclusions and give our troops recommendations for raising their combat readiness and improving the quality of operational and combat training.

The area for conducting the command-staff exercise was selected so that it enabled all control posts to be realistically deployed on the terrain and repeatedly shifted over actual distances. This area usually measured from 120 to 150 thousand square kilometers. This permitted army control posts to deploy from 150 to 250 kilometers away from their permanent deployment areas and to shift two to three times over a distance of 100 to 200 kilometers during the exercise. The staff of the directing body in this instance was located in the center of the area at a distance of 100 to 200 kilometers or more away from the staffs being trained. To communicate with them, messenger means, including aircraft and helicopters, were widely employed. In those cases where the areas of the combat actions of both sides far exceeded the limits of practical positioning of the command posts, a number of these problems were worked out on maps 50X1-HUM

The main document of an exercise is the concept, which we work up on a 1:500,000 (1:200,000) scale map with an attachment of explanatory notes. On the concept map we depict the initial

positions of the troops of both sides at the beginning of the exercise, the decision of the senior commander, the tasks and procedure for employing weapons of mass destruction; the strength, position, and tasks of the formations being trained, adjacent units and boundary lines between them, control posts of the directing body and of the trainee staffs, and operational indicators. In the explanatory notes we basically indicate the theme and training goals, the strength of the trainee staffs and troops, the time and area for conducting the exercise, a brief outline of the operational-tactical concept and the initial situation of both sides, the combat strength of the troops, their immediate and subsequent tasks, the number of nuclear and chemical warheads allocated for the operation, the time of their arrival, the possible balance of forces, flight resources and materiel, the stages of the exercise, their content, and the approximate time periods for carrying out the exercise.

Let us discuss certain matters which we consider to be fundamental in the methodology of training subordinates based on the example of a command-staff exercise conducted in 1966. It was divided into three stages: first -- the movement forward and organization of the commitment to the engagement of front troops; second -- the control of troops during the development of the offensive to the depth of the front's immediate task; third -- the commitment of the second echelon of the front to the engagement and the planning of combat actions to the depth of the subsequent task. Each stage lasted one to two days.

The exercise began by alerting the staffs and troops by a combat alert signal and moving them out to unfamiliar concentration areas up to 100 kilometers or more away from their permanent deployment areas. The time for the combat alert signal was kept a strict secret.

Upon arrival at the departure areas, staffs were handed an operational task and 1.5 to two hours later an operational directive to prepare and carry out the operation. The directive indicated only the subsequent task, the number of nuclear warheads and aircraft resources allocated for the operation, the axes of attack of adjacent units, and the boundary lines between them. All other problems -- the axis of the main attack, the time period for fulfilling the task, the rate of advance, 50X1-HUM others -- were decided by the trainees themselves.

Both sides were set up under approximately equal conditions, especially during the movement forward to the line of the commitment to the engagement. This afforded the trainees the opportunity to demonstrate greater creativity, resourcefulness, and initiative in preempting the "enemy" in delivering nuclear strikes and deploying troops, thereby ensuring the success of the engagement.

One of the important problems of the exercise, to which the directing body devoted close attention, was the method of making the decision for the operation and of transmitting the tasks to the troops.

Having received the combat task, the formation commander, together with the chief of staff and chief of the operations directorate, refined it and specified the principal troop preparation measures. Within 20 to 30 minutes he conducted the operational orientation of the chiefs of the branch arms and services and then issued preliminary instructions to the troops. While continuing work on making the decision, the formation commander in addition allocated for this work the chief of rocket troops and artillery and the chief of intelligence, and listened to some reports from other subordinates.

As the decision was being drawn up, the axis officers who were present transmitted it immediately to the troops on all communications channels. Two operations officers each prepared one map of the decision. In order to save time, the tasks were transmitted to the subordinates in sections and then confirmed by a written combat order or instruction. This method of working permitted a considerable reduction in the time needed to make the decision and transmit the combat tasks to the troops.

Simultaneously with this, attention was devoted to shortening the time required to work up planning documents and to reduce their volume. A great deal of attention was devoted to this problem while the exercise was still under preparation.

The briefing on the decisions of trainee commanders and chiefs was conducted at their command posts under routine working procedures. Primary attention was focused on the skill of generals and officers, in utilizing their working maps, to concisely and accurately report the tasks, the conclusions based

on an appraisal of the situation, and the decision backed up by the necessary calculations, as well as on their skill in assigning tasks to subordinate troops with the utmost conciseness and precision.

The most demanding stage of an operational exercise, in our opinion, is that of playing out the combat actions of both sides, which is conducted in a specific operational-tactical situation and is based solely on decisions of the trainees. The directing body and umpires play a special role in this. In essence, the instructive value of conducting the exercise and the quality with which the training problems are worked out depend on them. The combat actions are played out hour by hour when operational and sidereal time coincide. During the exercise, depending on the decisions of both sides, the director, acting in the role of front (army) commander, refined the tasks for the formations (large units) and assigned new tasks. At times, when working out particular problems, trainees were given authority to independently determine the subsequent course of combat actions.

The buildup of the situation was carried out by final umpires, umpires attached to the staffs of large units and units, and officers of the staff of the directing body. To work out the most important problems of the theme, operational transitions were employed, for example, when committing the front's second echelon to the engagement, when joining in a meeting engagement, when repulsing an enemy counterattack, and so forth. The situation for the operational transitions was transmitted to the trainees as hypothetical information which presented the status of the troops of both sides for a specific time. As a rule, the information on the situation was not comprehensive and considerable work was needed to refine it.

Particular attention is devoted to the correct and timely playing out of massed nuclear strikes. In a two-sided exercise this play begins after refining the status and readiness of the rocket troops and aviation, the overall situation, and the targets of the nuclear strikes. The directing body, having the strike decisions of both sides, assesses each strike and checks the procedure for transmitting the tasks to the immediate executors and their readiness to fulfil them. The right to deliver nuclear strikes first is granted to that side whose<sup>50X1-HUM</sup> decision is most desirable and comprehensively supported.

In a one-sided exercise and in war games the delivery of a massed nuclear strike on behalf of the enemy is played out according to the plan of the directing body, which is worked out in advance and refined during the exercise. The playing out of the strike is conducted exactly according to the time during which its delivery has been planned. In the same manner as when playing out the entire course of combat actions, the staffs do not receive complete information about enemy nuclear strikes. Only the staffs of the troops subjected to the attack are informed. This being the case, complete data about the results of the strikes are not given to the trainees. Based on the characteristic features of nuclear bursts, they themselves must determine the ground zeroes, the type and yield of the bursts and their results. This obliges the trainees to continuously study the radiation and chemical situation, to require reports on it from subordinates, and to expand the mutual exchange of information with adjacent units.

Considerable attention is devoted to methods of working out problems of troop control. For this purpose, control posts are placed at actual distances and during an exercise they change positions several times. The difficulty of maintaining communications over great distances and under conditions of active enemy jamming is obvious. And the main thing is that this compels trainee staffs to seek methods of improving control and to carry out in an organized and systematic manner the relocation and deployment of command posts and communications centers in new areas. For this purpose, the practice of putting certain posts out of action and of transferring control to others is employed extensively in exercises. The principal indices in evaluating the work of generals and officers, and also of units allocated for command-staff exercises, were the quickness with which communications means, principally radio means, were brought to operating readiness, the skill of trainees in making a decision and transmitting it to executors in a short period of time, and continuous monitoring of the passing of commands.

In our opinion, such a method of preparing and conducting these undertakings enables us to increase the combat readiness of troops and staffs and the teamwork of control organs, promotes the fullest study of the problems of preparing and conducting present-day operations, increases the individual operational-tactical training of generals and officers, and also

Page 18 of 23 Pages  
50X1-HUM

enables us to uncover deficiencies in troop and staff training and plan practical ways of correcting them.

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Under present-day conditions high demands are imposed upon the training of troop control organs. This also fully applies to the staff of the airborne troops. Besides the individual military-theoretical training of officers, which is improved systematically in operational training assemblies and officer training periods, organizing the teamwork of the headquarters of the airborne troops as a whole, as the organ of troop control in an airborne operation, is of primary importance.

The basic methods of training the staff of the airborne troops, as in other operational staffs, were operational games on maps, and command-staff training practices and exercises on the terrain with communications means.

The first undertaking at this level was a war game directed by the formation commander which permitted us to investigate the capabilities of the staff of the airborne troops to plan an airborne operation within a short period of time and to control troops during the landing and conduct of combat actions. The strength and capabilities were specified for the operations group of the staff which was landed in the enemy rear. Staff departments and chiefs of the branch arms and services obtained practice in joint work in planning an operation. During the game possible methods were determined for cooperation of the airborne landing forces and military transport aviation with the Strategic Rocket Forces, the Air Defense Forces of the Country, long range aviation, naval forces, and front troops in the zone used for the landing.

Since the concept was developed taking into account the actual grouping of enemy forces in the Western Theater of Military Operations, generals and officers had the opportunity to study closely the NATO troop groupings in the areas where we proposed to employ a large airborne landing force, to research the conditions of setting it down by parachute and landing methods, and to determine probable changes in the enemy grouping and the nature of the terrain as a result of massed nuclear strikes. 50X1-HUM



Page 19 of 23 Pages  
50X1-HUM

During the game the existing airfield network in the departure areas for the landing of airborne divisions was carefully researched; and the optimal variant for troop movement to the waiting areas, the forces and means required for this, and also the time to get ready were specified.

The game began with the delivery of a directive from the General Staff to the staffs of the airborne troops and military transport aviation to prepare and conduct an airborne operation. Based on this, the staffs worked out an operation plan which was reported to the director. A relatively short time was allocated to prepare the operation; this time was determined mainly by the capability of large units of airborne troops and military transport aviation to concentrate near the airfields (at the airfields) of the departure area for the landing operation.

After the operation plan was approved, the staff drafted orders for the large units and refined the cooperation with the staffs of the rocket troops, the air defense forces of the country, and the front staff within whose zone military transport aviation was carrying out its flights. In actuality, the operations groups and staffs of the cooperating troops were not sent out and the directing body implemented the play for them. Although the commanders and staffs of the airborne divisions worked out planning documents, their role basically consisted in assisting the staff of the airborne troops with the play, and supplying it with necessary information during the game.

In the second stage of the game -- the landing and combat actions of the airborne troops -- as the airborne landing forces were built up, the role of their commander and staff was assumed by an operations group, which, in accordance with the situation, landed with one of the airborne divisions. When the battle was under way, the director was briefed on the decisions of the commanders of the divisions, the commander of the airborne landing force, and also the chiefs of the branch arms and services concerning all-round support for the battle of the landing force and the organization of the delivery of materiel to it.

50X1-HUM

This methodology of conducting games allowed us to follow in sequence the work of all the command levels and quite accurately determine each one's volume of work and role during the

preparation and conduct of an airborne landing operation.

In 1966 a command-staff training practice on the terrain was conducted with generals and officers of the Headquarters. Operations groups from several airborne division staffs and communications units and subunits were allocated for it.

During the training practice, the problems worked out were mainly those of practical troop control and the organization and operation of communications means; for this purpose umpires were sent from among officers of the Headquarters of the Airborne Troops to the staffs of the large units which had been positioned near their permanent deployment areas. These umpires were charged with the duty of issuing data on the situation (primarily after the landing force was dropped) at specific times and recording the passage of information and instructions.

Furthermore, two operations groups were allocated from the staff of the airborne troops to work in the staffs of the fronts in whose areas military transport aviation was flying on the landing operation and the airborne landing force was being landed. One group worked in the staff of the North Caucasus Military District, where the necessary radio communications means had been placed at its disposal; the other group worked independently with its own communications means but it was positioned at a considerable distance (several hundred kilometers) from the staff of the airborne troops.

This separation of the participating staffs allowed us to test the capabilities of communications means and their suitability for the requirements of troop control during the preparation and conduct of an airborne operation; it also placed the participating staffs in conditions which closely approximated actual conditions. All information was sent by radio only, since in the second stage of the training practice all staffs were taken out into the field.

Unfortunately, we were forced to allow conventionalities here, as well. As before, the directing body played the parts of the staffs of large units and units of the cooperating troops from the branches of the armed forces. The trainees received prepared data upon request or inquiry (on nuclear strikes, the actions of combat aviation, etc.), which is hardly possible under

Page 21 of 23 Pages

50X1-HUM

actual conditions.

However, by and large the measures carried out helped in working out a unity of views on the main points of preparing and conducting an operation, they made the generals and officers of the headquarters regard their role in a new light and reorganize their personal training accordingly, helped resolve a number of controversial and important problems, and finally, provided the staff of the airborne troops with the basic practical skills for work as the organ of troop control during an operation.

At the same time, their results showed that the methodology of operational training of the staff of the airborne troops (the headquarters as a whole) requires further improvement. It is advisable to allocate generals and officers of the main staffs of the branches of the armed forces and branch arms for operational games and exercises of the headquarters of the airborne troops at any level as well as large units or units which may participate directly or indirectly in an airborne operation. In all games and exercises, it is decidedly necessary for an operations group (or the staff as a whole) of military transport aviation to participate. Only through joint work can we acquire the necessary skills, resolve "contradictions", and when "conflicts" arise, find mutually acceptable solutions.

We may take as an example of this the joint work of the headquarters of an airborne division and the headquarters of a heavy bomber air corps of long range aviation in a command-staff game. Before the game began it seemed that everything was clear. However, when representatives of the staffs started to resolve problems together, many "blank spots" were discovered.

We considered it necessary, for example, to establish direct radio communications between the staff of the landing force and the staff of the bomber air division after the landing, but later on it proved more expedient to do this through the staff of the corps and the operations group from the airborne troops attached to the front staff. It was expected that a group of aircraft guidance officers from the corps staff would be dropped in the complement of the landing force, but as was ascertained later, it is almost impossible to allocate such a group of officers. Finally, it turned out to be far from simple for the landing f50X1-HUM staff to receive reconnaissance data from on board long range

Page 22 of 27 Pages  
50X1-HUMS

aviation reconnaissance aircraft. As a result, the joint work has shed light on many problems and indicated the need to carry out certain changes in the organizational structure and technical equipping of units.

In our opinion, special attention should be devoted to the participation of operations groups from the staffs of military districts in operational command-staff exercises and games carried out by the command of the airborne troops. This does not require great material expenditures or additional organizational work. A small group of officers with communications means can be allocated from the military district staff and it can be located either immediately in the military district staff or near it.

Joint work between the staff of the airborne troops and the staffs of the military districts is needed to develop common views on the solution of the central problems of conducting airborne operations, to provide the refueling of military transport aircraft at front airfields, to neutralize enemy air defense installations with front means in the overflight zone of military transport aviation during a landing operation, to support the combat actions of the airborne landing force after it has landed, to organize the supply of the landing force with materiel during combat, to conduct aerial reconnaissance in support of the landing force, and also to receive from the landing force the necessary reconnaissance information, maintain communications with it, etc.

The joint participation of the indicated staffs in operational games and command-staff exercises will in turn be of great benefit to the military districts since we cannot yet say that their staffs have acquired sufficient experience in organizing the landing of airborne troops and in supporting them.

During present-day operations, front-line formations have to employ both tactical and operational airborne landings. In a number of cases the task of directly controlling the operational airborne landing forces may be assigned to the front staffs. Hence a wide variety of questions will have to be specially treated in the front operation plan and they will have to be resolved within short periods of time.

50X1-HUM

Page 23 of 23 <sup>Page</sup><sub>50X1-HUM</sub>

In conclusion, it must be mentioned that at present it has become advisable to allocate generals and officers of the headquarters of the commander of the airborne troops more widely in large-scale exercises and games. Also, this headquarters should play the part of the staff of the front commander in an airborne landing operation. This situation and the nature of the work in large-scale operational exercises comes closest to approaching actual combat conditions. In them we are given the opportunity to test in practice the validity of all theoretical propositions and calculations.

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